

of St John of Jerusalem,* and was completed by Prior Doeber in 1504. This prior was the immediate predecessor of the last superior of the house, Sir William Weston, and retained his office from 1502 to 1523. In 1661 a view of the gate was taken by Hollar, shewing to advantage the effect produced by the battlements, then complete, but now entirely gone. In the reign of James I. it was inhabited by Sir Roger Wilbraham; but it has acquired much greater celebrity from having been the residence of Edward Cave, the printer, to whom the literary and antiquarian world owes so many obligations, and here emanated from the press the favourite and one of the oldest and most respectable of our monthly periodicals, the "Gentleman's Magazine," which was born in the gate in January, 1731, and is still flourishing. Among the numerous visitors at that time were Goldsmith and Dr. Samuel Johnson (Cave being his friend and early patron). Dr. Johnson's pen was continually at work, and his pamphlets, prefaces, epitaphs, essays, and biographical memoirs were continually published in the old gate, either by themselves or in the "Gentleman's Magazine." In 1740, and for more than two years afterwards, he wrote the Parliamentary speeches in the same magazine, and these were followed by his "Life of Savage," "English Dictionary," "The Vanity of Human Wishes," the "Rambler," and many other popular literary productions.

St. John's Gate has been in a state of decline for years: unfortunately, the disease has now assumed a serious aspect, but the committee rest assured that the public taste will never allow it to be disfigured or destroyed; that they will come forward and promote its recovery, if not to so good a state of health as formerly, still, to give it a respectable appearance of old age, and, for once, to nullify the old saying—

"— Thus 'tis ever; what's within our ken,
Owl-like, we blink at, and direct our search
To furthest Inde in quest of novelties;
Whilst here, at home, upon our very thresholds,
Ten thousand objects hurtle into view,
Of interest wonderful."

The subscriptions will be devoted to the reparation of the decorative portions of the Gate, such as tapping or testing each stone in the north and south fronts, carefully rubbing those that are sound, and replacing those which are too much decomposed with new stone, not squared, but inserted so as to conform with the present appearance of the building. The committee recommend carrying up the embattlements in stone in front of the angular turrets and parapets to their original height, inserting new labels to the doors and windows, string-courses and bands around, new and proper mullions, with cinque-foil heads to the large windows in the north and south fronts, and removing the unsightly Roman doorway and shop-window on the south side, and placing a new window and doorway in keeping with the old gate; and to point up the sides of the building with stone or slate set in good mortar, finished with blue ash mortar, to preserve an uniform colour.

A design shewing the restoration of the gate will be presented to the subscribers to the repairs, a list of whom will be printed, as well as a detailed statement of every expenditure, which it is presumed will require from 500*l.* to 600*l.*; in case of an overplus, a meeting of the subscribers will decide in what manner it is to be appropriated.

Subscriptions may be paid to Mr. W. P. Griffith, 9, St. John's-square, Clerkenwell, hon. sec., and at the office of THE BUILDER, 2, York-street, Covent-garden.

IRON BEAMS.—Some of the largest plates that were ever made in Scotland were rolled at the Dundvan Iron Works a short time ago. The weight of the slab from which each plate was rolled was 1,700 lbs., and when finished, measured 16 feet in length, 3 feet two inches in width, and nearly an inch thick; the weight of each plate varying from 13½ to 14 cwt. Nor is the weight and dimensions of these plates their greatest novelty, for they are intended to be used as walking-beams, and being lighter and more durable, will, it is likely, soon supersede the necessity of the present unwieldy cast-iron beams.

* Founded in 1100; church dedicated in 1103; destroyed in 1201; and rebuilt about 1204.

GOTHIC ORNAMENTS FROM THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF YORK.

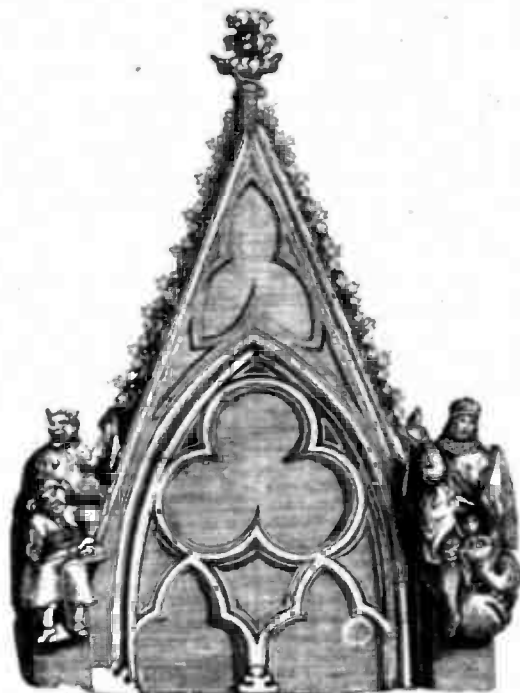


Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.

GOTHIC ORNAMENTS FROM THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF YORK.*

On each side of the windows in the aisles of the nave an ornamented compartment is formed on the wall. Fig. 9 represents the pediment of one of these in the north aisle. The height of it from the springing of the arch to the top of the finial, as stated by Hallsperdy, is 8 feet 3 inches; from the floor to the top of it is 34 feet. The width is 3 feet 10 inches. There are fourteen of these compartments in the north aisle, fourteen in the south aisle; the figures of each are different.

Fig. 10 shows one of the capitals of the pillars in the choir, from which spring the groins of the roof. The arrangement of these capitals is peculiar and elegant; they are 2 feet 6 inches high, and 62 feet from the ground. They belong to the end of the fourteenth, or beginning of the fifteenth century.

In connection with these illustrations of York Minster we have given in a previous page the commencement of an article on the fires which have occurred there, and the recent restorations; and hereafter shall present to our readers accurate drawings of the new doors, designed by Mr. Sydney Smirke.

* See page 139 ante.